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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/28/06  
 LAST UPDATED 2/1/06      HB \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR Nava

SHORT TITLE Extend Kindergarten Plus Project      SB 453

ANALYST Aguilar

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
\$1,000.0		Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in House Bill 3  
 Duplicates HB-43

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY06	FY07	FY08	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>	\$39.0	\$39.0		\$78.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Office of Education Accountability (OEA)  
 Public Education Department (PED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 453 appropriates \$1 million from the general fund to the Public Education Department to expand the Kindergarten Plus pilot project.

The bill extends the length of the Kindergarten Plus pilot project by three years. The pilot provides for extending the kindergarten year by up to four months but no less than 40 instructional

days for the purpose of demonstrating increased time in kindergarten narrows the achievement gap, increases cognitive skills and leads to higher test scores.

The bill further expands the program beyond the Albuquerque, Gallup-McKinley, Gadsden and Las Cruces school districts to any other school district with high poverty schools while allowing those districts participating to continue their existing program or expanding by adding additional classes.

The bill provides for educational assistants to be paid at the same rate and under the same terms as they would be paid for regular full-day kindergarten programs.

The bill also removes the provision requiring the department to provide professional development to Kindergarten Plus teachers in how children learn to read.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

PED notes that by increasing funding to \$1 million, Senate Bill 453 proposes to nearly triple the number of students potentially served, moving from 266 to approximately 665, increasing the administrative burden on the PED. An additional FTE would be required to administer the program full-time.

The appropriation of \$1 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2007 shall revert to the general fund.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The Kindergarten Plus Pilot began in FY04 as a three year pilot study to extend the traditional full-day Kindergarten Year by an additional four months. The pilot was based on the premise that additional days spent in kindergarten would decrease the risk of disadvantaged, particularly high poverty children of falling behind their peers and beginning first grade without skills necessary to learn. Classrooms were begun in Albuquerque, Gallup-McKinley, Las Cruces and Gadsden. Schools within these districts were eligible to apply if 85 percent or more of the students were eligible for free or reduced priced lunch.

Kindergarten Plus does not promote a specific curriculum, but rather, according to the Public Education Department (PED) application, each program applying must certify that it was “comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, and based on scientific research. Districts were allowed significant flexibility in the implementation of Kindergarten Plus. In addition to not outlining a specific curriculum, after the first pilot year, each district was allowed to allocate the additional classroom time in ways that were appropriate to the district needs, which created four distinct Kindergarten Plus programs.

Evaluations conducted by OEA and PED found that students who participated in Kindergarten Plus demonstrated positive results on the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment. The evaluation also found that teachers and administrators felt that Kindergarten Plus helped at-risk students gain important social and oral language skills, that they began

first grade ready to learn, and in some instances were more academically advanced in first grade

than peers who had not participated in Kindergarten Plus.

### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

Implementing the provisions of Senate Bill 453 is expected to support the PED’s performance measure relating to the percent of fourth-grade students who achieve proficiency or above on the criterion-references assessments in reading and language arts; and (2) percent of fourth-grade students who achieve proficiency or above on the criterion-referenced assessment in mathematics.

### **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

Senate Bill 453 relates to an appropriation contained in House Bill 3. SB453 duplicates House Bill 43

### **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

The Office of Educational Accountability notes Senate Bill 453 requires that Kindergarten Plus students be assessed in “literacy, numeracy and cognitive and social skills,” (page 3, line 17). Currently, New Mexico does not have an official measure of Kindergarten numeracy. The Legislature may wish to consider removing the word numeracy from the requirement of the bill until the adoption of a Kindergarten numeracy assessment.

PA/mt